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RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 0593
RUEHSV/AMEMBASSY SUVA 0494
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WELLINGTON 000600

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STATE FOR EAP/ANP AND OES/OA
PACOM FOR JO1E/J2/J233/J5/SJFHQ

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TAGS: [SENV](#) [EFIS](#) [IWC](#) [PREL](#) [ETRD](#) [NZ](#) [XV](#)

SUBJECT: PACIFIC ISLANDS BETRAY NEW ZEALAND OVER WHALES

REF: WELLINGTON 406

(U) Classified By: Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Katherine
[1](#)B. Hadda, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

[1](#)1. (SBU) GNZ feels betrayed by Pacific Island countries (PICs) that voted in support of the pro-whaling lobby at the 58th Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission. But New Zealand officials say that rather than entering into an aid battle with the pro-whaling lobby they intend to remain focused on the elimination of poverty in the region by promoting good governance and building institutional capacity. Meanwhile, GNZ is looking ahead for better IWC outcomes, and hopes to continue cooperation with USG officials towards that end. End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Poloff recently discussed with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) officials GNZ views on whaling and Pacific Island countries following the 58th Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), held last June in St. Kitts and Nevis

Pacific Islands betray New Zealand

[1](#)3. (U) The Acting Director of MFAT's Environment Division, Christine Bogle, said that PICs helped the pro-whaling lobby defeat conservationists when 33 member states voted in favor and 32 states against the St. Kitts and Nevis Declaration. The St. Kitts declaration called for an end to the moratorium on commercial whaling, stated that the moratorium runs counter to the 1946 International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW), and accepted that whales are consuming huge quantities of fish and threaten the food security of coastal nations.

[1](#)4. (U) While the declaration lacks force without backing by 75 percent of member states, both GNZ and the New Zealand public felt betrayed when all six PIC members of the IWC voted in favor of the declaration: Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Republic of Palau, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. (FYI: NZ is currently contributing to peacekeeping efforts in the Solomons. End FYI.) In a June 19 press release, NZ's Minister of Conservation Chris Carter (an Assistant Commissioner to the IWC and GNZ's lead negotiator) said that "these countries have let down their neighbors in the Pacific, many of whom have established whale sanctuaries to protect marine life in their waters. New

Zealand has often gone the extra mile for many of these Pacific nations and today they have not reciprocated."

15. (SBU) All of the PICs were co-sponsors to the St. Kitts declaration, and as a group took a strong pro-Japan position on four other votes. The Solomons abstained on two votes (introducing secret ballots and allowing Japanese coastal communities to hunt whales), and Kiribati and Tuvalu each abstained on one vote (Japanese coastal whaling and elimination of Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary, respectively).

Bogle said that leaders from four of the PICs, the Solomons, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Nauru, had previously informed Carter that they would not vote in favor of overturning the moratorium.

16. (U) The Opposition National Party was quick to criticize the Government, with Foreign Affairs spokesperson Murray McCully saying that Carter should be removed as lead negotiator, and that the "defection" of key Pacific states was the result of a "half-hearted, insufficiently focused New Zealand aid strategy in the Pacific." "We should be having a very focused conversation about the International Whaling Commission and other items as part of a total relationship package," McCully said. New Zealand's Foreign Minister Winston Peters countered saying that "binding aid to the compliance of Pacific countries with the policies and procedures of donor countries is the exact thing we are trying to get rid of."

Future strategy toward the Pacific Islands

17. (C) MFAT has directed its overseas posts to discuss with Pacific Island governments the outcomes of IWC, but has not

WELLINGTON 00000600 002 OF 002

received any responses to date, said Bogle. GNZ will approach the departments of conservation in PICs and will express its disappointment with the voting and suggest support for conservation through whale-watching. GNZ sees whale-watching as an important vehicle for the pro-conservation lobby.

18. (SBU) But as Minister Peters noted, despite disappointment over the PIC IWC votes, GNZ is not going to enter a battle of aid with Japan and the pro-whaling community. Bogle said NZAID priorities are focused on the elimination of poverty through building of institutional capacity (such as primary education) and good governance initiatives. Deputy Director of the Pacific Division, MFAT, Marion Crawshaw agreed. She said "we've got bigger issues with the Pacific Islands than whales, but we will continue to raise the issue, especially in the Solomons. We have regular contact with the Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources Nollen Leni as part of a NZAID fisheries project." The project, which is intended to strengthen the institutions around fisheries and revenue, is part of GNZ commitment under the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) in 2006/2007, Crawshaw said.

GNZ interests going forward

19. (SBU) Bogle said that Japan announced in St. Kitts its intention to host a conference for "normalization" of the IWC (a movement toward management of commercial whaling), and understood that Japan would provide member states with details on the conference within a month of the St. Kitts meeting. To date, GNZ has received no further details on the conference, and requests that we share any information we receive. GNZ is concerned about what the outcomes of such a conference may be, but believes it would provide important signals for the 59th annual meeting of the IWC in Anchorage, Alaska next year.

110. (SBU) As work on the Revised Management Scheme (RMS) progresses, GNZ seeks nothing weaker than existing international provisions for managing marine mammals, such as those provided by the Commission for the Conservation of

Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), said Bogle. She said GNZ is pleased that U.S. Commissioner Dr. William Hogarth has been elected as the next Chair of the IWC, and noted that Sir Geoffrey Palmer, former New Zealand Prime Minister and GNZ's Commissioner to the IWC, strongly supported and lobbied on behalf of Dr. Hogarth. Bogle said GNZ supports the renewal of the aboriginal subsistence quotas next year, but suspects that the Japanese may try to block renewal as bargaining leverage for the resumption of commercial whaling.

McCormick